

we eat them in bed, backs  
to the wall, watching a movie  
on the vcr. regular pizza  
is just too heavy. we've  
talked about this. we've  
come to this conclusion.  
also that we love  
one another.

#### MY MOZART SERIES

she wanted to know why i took a picture of the bananas  
in the basket, and i told her that i did so because their  
yellow was so bright and inviting. i don't think she  
accepted this as much of a reason though, and so when i  
took a picture of the sink in the bathroom i really had  
something to answer for. but i had never lived with such  
an expensive camera before and i was charmed with how  
easy it was to use, and how sharp and glossy the results  
were. the thing made me look like a professional, at least  
in the eyes of this amateur. and i kept at it: recording  
many still lifes of the apartment, until pictures were  
piled so high on the dresser that it was getting hard to  
see in

the mirror. finally it got to the point where there  
wasn't anything to snap away at anymore. i had used the  
place up, so to speak, and i had no intentions of going  
outside. there was nothing intimate in the outside world  
to me, and i really considered myself a photographer of  
the intimate only. so the only thing left for me that held  
any interest was to take pictures of the stereo while  
different pieces of favorite music were being played. i  
started with mozart. i did a series of twenty-seven photos  
for every one of his piano concertos. all of them i owned  
on tape so it wasn't hard to do this. it was called "my  
mozart series." on the back of each photo was marked the  
number of the concerto. of course, this didn't sit too  
well with my girlfriend either, and she set out on a  
campaign of nagging questions concerning it. for my part:  
i just accused her of not appreciating mozart.

#### BEFORE I SIT DOWN TO WRITE

before i sit down to write i put an old movie  
on the tv and sit on the purple couch for  
about an hour with a newspaper in my lap  
i ignore



before i sit down to write i go in the kitchen  
and make myself a big cheese sandwich, pour  
myself a glass of wine and stand in the window  
and watch the cars passing below on the highway

before i sit down to write i put some music on  
the stereo and walk around adjusting the pictures  
on the walls, even going so far as to rearrange  
some of them, putting them in places i never  
thought of before

before i sit down to write i go in the bathroom  
and trim my beard, washing the hairs down the  
drain with ice-cold water

before i sit down to write i live forty years,  
nine months and fifteen some odd days in needful  
yet exhausting preparation

#### POETRY HAS RUINED ME

my father likes to tell people that poetry has ruined  
my life. it doesn't bother me anymore when i happen to  
hear him say this. all my life he has been a source of  
negative comment. also i am at the age now where we've  
said just about everything to one another so many times  
that nothing has any punch anymore. and as far as poetry  
ruining my life goes, well, there is some truth to this,  
at least in some regards. for example: because of poetry  
i will never keep my lawn neatly cut. it'll grow wild  
and the weeds will have their own way. my car will al-  
ways be an old jalopy. it will be ruined with rust, and  
the insides will always be piled high with newspapers  
and model airplanes that won't fly (if ever i decide to  
attempt building and flying model airplanes). my house  
will be in perpetual shambles, eaten to the ground by  
poetry as if by crazed carpenter ants. and my children  
will be worthless. my ruined life will have ruined  
children running around it. they will be ruined by a  
lack of authority on my part, and they will run free  
to terrorize the neighborhood and eventually grow up  
and have ruined children of their own, who in turn will  
go out and ruin the four corners of the world. my  
wife will be ruined too. i'll ruin her with poetry  
just like i've ruined my own life. in time her  
teeth will turn black, her hair will turn white and  
her skin will rot with ruin. all this will happen  
to her from the effects of my poetry. i too will die  
from it. ruined in my grave. honored in heaven.

— Ronald Baatz  
Kingston NY